Selected quotes from CRS report on ETS

I. Overall view on E.S in testimony before Senate panel:

In testimony before a Senate subcommittee, CRS concluded that "the statistical evidence does not appear to support a conclusion that there are substantial health effects of passive smoking."p7

II. Statements regarding workplace/public exposure to ETS (the area with the only clear public policy implication):

"OSHA based its risk assessment on a workplace risk estimate by Fontham et.al., which indicated an increased risk, and chose not to use the remaining estimates which found no overall association between workplace exposure and lung cancer."p3-4

"OSHA concluded that the ETS lung cancer risk ranges from 1.20 to 1.50. It did not provide any explanation of how it arrived at this estimate ... nor did it indicate what this risk is relative to."p61

"Therefore, had OSHA performed a meta-analysis, it seems likely that it would have found no increased lung cancer risk from occupational ETS exposure."p62 (emphasis added)

"For a person exposed only to background ETS, the [chance of dying of lung cancer from the ETS over a lifetime] number drops to about 7/100 of one percent." p2 (emphasis added)

III. Question marks about EPA science, which undermines the findings even in the extreme cases:

"Even at the greatest integrated exposure levels, the measured risks are still subject to uncertainty." p2 (emphasis added)

"One implication of the potential disparity between the different types of exposure measurements is that combining risk assessments of several studies at the highest exposure levels probably yields misleading results."p31

"The calculations presented above are just a sample of the very large number of misclassification rate combinations possible in these ETS studies. **It seems clear from those results, however, that possible combinations of small rates -- below 10 percent -- could drive ETS relative risks in the highest exposure groups to values no longer distinct from 1.0 [or no risk], even in a study that produces relatively high risks.** While these results were obtained from the Fontham study, similar results are likely from the Brownson study. Even smaller values of these rates -- below 3 percent -- could be combined to reduce the lower bounds of the 95 percent confidence intervals well below 1.0 for these studies." p40 (emphasis added)

"These simulated calculations indicate that misclassification can be a potent uncertainty in these ETS epi studies, and could account for the measured risk values."p3

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"It is clear that misclassification and recall bias plague ETS epidemiology studies. It is also clear from the simulations that modest, possible misclassification and recall bias rates can change the measured relative risk results, possibly in dramatic ways."p45 (emphasis added)

IV. What CRS says about the plausibility of ETS involvement with heart disease:

"Whereas EPA's estimate of the ETS-related lung cancer risk (RRs = 1.19) among never-smoking women is a small fraction (2 percent) of the lung cancer risk for ever-smoking women (RR = 11), Wells' estimate of the ETS-related heart disease risk is *almost one-third* of the risk among ever smokers. Because of these relationships, some investigators have questioned the biological plausibility of the passive smoking heart disease risk estimates."p67 (emphasis added)

"Further indications that these results may be too large are found in the publication of two large new studies that found no risk of heart disease from passive smoking."p68 (emphasis added)

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